



Sam Brownback

UNITED STATES SENATOR ■ KANSAS

303 Hart Senate Office Building • Washington DC 20510 • (202) 224-8950

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CONTACT ERIK HOTMIRE

MARRIAGE PENALTY TAX RELIEF PASSES SENATE

WASHINGTON – As a Congressional leader to bring tax fairness to millions of working American families, U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback said today's Senate passage of the Marriage Tax Relief Reconciliation Act (H.R. 4810) sends a strong message about the importance of families and the unfairness of the tax code.

"The Senate today has sent an important message – marriage should not be taxed," Brownback said. "Married couples should not be taxed at a higher rate just because they are married. Parents should be trusted to spend their hard-earned money on their families as they see fit.

"As the House prepares to take up this legislation, we look forward to sending to the president meaningful tax relief for hardworking American families who suffer from this unfair tax.

"The marriage penalty currently effects almost 50 percent of America's families, causing them, on average, to pay an additional \$1,480 in taxes every year simply because they are married. This is wrong.

"The government should not use the coercive power of the tax code to erode the foundation of our society. When marriage as an institution breaks down, children suffer. The past few decades have seen a huge increase in out-of-wedlock births and divorce, the combination of which has substantially undermined the well-being of children in virtually all areas of life: physical and psychological health, socialization, academic achievement, and even the likelihood of suffering physical abuse.

"Study after study has shown that children do best when they grow up in a stable home, raised by two parents who are committed to each other through marriage. Newlyweds face enough challenges without paying punitive damages in the form of the marriage tax. The last thing the federal government should do is penalize the institution that is the foundation of a civil society.

"We need to begin making an investment in America's families – using the on-budget surplus to rid the tax code of this unfair tax is one way to make such an investment.

"The surging surplus is the result of non-payroll tax receipts. In other words, the surplus is really a tax overpayment to the government. We must give the American people the growth rebate they deserve and return this overpayment in the form of marriage penalty relief," Brownback said.